

KELLOGG FOUNDATION'S INTEREST IN RURAL LEADERSHIP

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Leadership is of paramount importance to further development of rural life. Rural America needs to be better informed. The people need to have a better base for discussion. They need to recognize opportunity for leadership and to become involved in the everyday processes of our society.

The Kellogg Foundation has taken the initial lead to encourage agricultural leadership development programs in Michigan, beginning in 1965 with the Kellogg Farmers Study Program, and in Pennsylvania, Montana, and California during the next six years.

There were many similarities among the programs in the four states, yet each was unique in many ways. Common concerns in most of the four state programs included:

1. Farmers are educated in the sciences, management, and technology, but they are inadequately educated in the discipline of general economics, government, communications, education, the arts, and sociology.

2. Politically, agriculture has been seriously weakened by the shift of political power to the urban populace.

3. Throughout America there is need for improvement of communications between rural and urban people.

4. The diversity of interests within agriculture is a further problem of developing leadership as one voice, for the whole of agriculture. The range of commodity interests is great.

5. Agriculture is a highly important industry in nearly every state in America. The importance of agriculture to national and international trade demands of its leaders knowledge and understanding of the interactions among people of the world.

These are general reasons for developing effective leadership programs in agriculture. Many years are usually required for potential leaders to rise to responsible positions of leadership. Accelerated growth of leadership development in our young people in agriculture is worth the cost of these programs.

Those of us involved believe the Kellogg Foundation has been fully satisfied with the four state programs. Two of these state programs will now be discussed by participants in the programs.